dower, was bur. at Thorpe Malsor 1 March 1727/8. After her death the estate passed, under the will of her husband's uncle, Robert Maunsell, dat. 19 Jan. 1704/5,[10] to the testator's "cousin Thomas Maunsell (son of cousin John Maunsell, of Ireland, Esq., commonly called Captain Maunsell) for his life," with rem. to his sons in tail male. This Thomas Maunsell (who was youngest son of Captain John Maunsell, a younger son of Thomas, the emigrant to Ireland in 1609, who was a younger brother of John Maunsell, the purchaser, in 1622, of the Thorpe Malsor estate) took possession of Thorpe Malsor accordingly and died there 27 Sep. 1739, in his 67th year, being ancestor of the Rev. Cecil Henry Maunsell, the present holder.[11]

[To be continued, with copies of extracts from parish registers, wills and other evidences, on which the additions to the pedigree of 1634 have been mostly based.]

KING ARTHUR: A CRITICISM.

In all the literature of romance there is no more attractive figure than Arthur. The legend has always had a fascination for me; and many an hour have I spent in vain endeavours to spin from it ever so slender a thread of history; but the task was like making ropes of sand, and I had not the wizard's secret. Eagerly therefore I took up *The Genealogist*, hoping that a more cunning hand than mine might prove to have achieved success.

Mr. Scott-Gatty's tentative pedigree gives a sad blow to these hopes. It is needless to remind him that neither a duchy of Cornwall nor a kingdom of North Wales existed in Arthur's time: how then are we to accept a duke of the one in the fifth, and a king of the other in the third century, as real persons? Helen again, mother of Constantine the Great, is said to have been a Dacian princess. Certain it is that from Greece sprang the original of her name, and that her son was born in Dacia. Before we are asked to reject that story in favour of King Coel, it would be well at least to offer some show of reason, and some evidence that Constantius had visited Britain at an earlier date. And when a second Helen is put down, without any evidence, as mother of a second imperial Constantine, and daughter of a second British king, it makes one the more incredulous.

But let us test the pedigree by dates. Of the same generation are the emperor who died in 306, and another slain in 388. History relates that Constantine the Great was born in 272. In 313 he had a marriageable daughter; in 323 a son capable of commanding his fleet. His mother may have been born *circa* 250; her father *circa* 225—certainly not much later than 230. Llewellyn is called his next brother: suppose we date his birth

[10] By this will he excluded the *heirs of the body* of John Maunsell, who purchased the estate, and substituted a collateral relative, viz., one of the numerous male descendants of Thomas Maunsell, *a younger brother* of the purchaser.

[11] See his descent set out more fully, note 4.

as late as 245, and his son's 290. That is to strain probablities; but even so we make Maximus all but one hundred at the time of his execution, over ninety when he embarked on a career of military adventure, and sixty or seventy at the most probable date for the birth of Constantine. Before proceeding further, would it not be well to refute the historians who represent him as a Spaniard, and Constantine (here called his son) as an adventurer of humble origin? Lastly if, as it would seem, Constantine's sons were grown men in 411, how old was Ambrose when he overthrew Vortigern, and begot Arthur—assuming for the moment that Ambrose was his son, and that the dates assigned to Ambrose and Arthur are correct?

As a matter of fact these dates have no basis except a palpable mistranslation of Gildas, for which a gloss of Bede's seems to be responsible. Other chronologers put them thirty years or so later. What Gildas says is this.[1] From the rise of Ambrose the war continued, with varying fortune,

usque ad annum obsessionis Badonici montis [qui prope Sabrinum ostium habetur] novissimæque ferme de furciferis non minimæ stragis, quique quadragesimus quartus, ut novi, orditur annus, mense jam primo emenso, qui jam et meæ nativitatis est.

Apart from textual variations, the sentence is characteristically obscure and anacoluthic, and its meaning may be open to question; but no editor that I have seen has introduced into his text any mention of "the landing of the Saxons," as in Bohn's translation, which Mr. Scott-Gatty quotes. The words *orditur* (or *oritur*, whichever is the correct reading) and *ut novi* seem to me to shew conclusively that he is reckoning backward from the date of writing to Mount Badon; while *mense* (not *annus*) is the natural antecedent to *qui*. I would therefore paraphrase thus:—The year now begun is, to my own knowledge, the forty-fourth since that event; and one month is already over—the month of my birth."

What then of Gildas—the one authority contemporary with the age of Arthur; and how much does he tell us? The *Vita Gildæ* makes him one of four and twenty sons of a Scottish king; but that is scarcely credible, after reading his own description of the Scots.[2] Others interpret the sentence above quoted to mean that he was born in the year of Mount Badon, a sense which, it seems to me, the words will hardly bear; yet to square with that theory he has been split up into two, and a *Gildas Badonicus* invented. Internal evidence shews that he was either a Roman

[1] For the text of Gildas and Nennius I have used Stevenson's edition 1838, the *Monumenta Historica Britannica* (ed. Hardy) 1848, and the *Monumenta Germaniæ Historica* (ed. Mommsen) Berlin 1894. The punctuation is my own. I enclose in square brackets words accepted by some of these editors, but rejected by others. Those so treated in the passage here quoted, if they be not a gloss, shew that the Bristol Channel was an unknown region to the writer; though according to the *Vita Gildæ* he resided principally at Glastonbury, and upon the Steep Holm in the Channel itself.

[2] For the Picts and Scots Gildas expresses a peculiar abhorrence. The Saxons he represents as bloodthirsty and treacherous foes; but Picts and Scots as ridiculous and degraded savages as well.

domiciled in Britain, or a Briton saturated with the Roman culture and traditions, who flourished in the sixth century. Latin is *nostra lingua*: Diocletian the lawful emperor, Maximus and the rest being mere upstarts and pretenders. On the other hand, the soil of Britain is *in nostro cæspite:* Picts, Scots and Saxons *nostri inimici:* even the sins and follies of the Britons are upon his own head. He played in fact the part of a British Jeremiah. His admiration is all for Rome, the seat of religion and empire: the Roman character and institutions he contrasts with the vices and disorder of his own countrymen—their lack of courage, manliness, and stability; their want of foresight; their internecine feuds. The desperate struggle for existence, and their great deliverance, had taught them a lesson; but a generation since grown up was fast lapsing into the old vices. Of all this Gildas writes as within his own recollection.

Unfortunately the *History*, so called, is not a narrative, but a piece of turgid rhetoric, involved and obscure. The facts it supplies might all be compressed into a paragraph or two. Moreover even in his time the materials for history were wanting. The land was desolate; the cities in ruins; the people reduced to savagery, or scattered upon other shores. In the absence of native records, he tells us, he wrote the tale of all that Britain did and suffered under the Roman emperors as best he could,

non tam ex scripturis patriæ scriptorumve monimentis, quippe quæ vel si qua fuerint aut ignibus hostium exusta [sunt] aut civium exsilii classe longius deportata non compareant, quam transmarina relatione, quæ crebris inrupta intercapedinibus non satis claret.

In other words, continental authors supplied him with brief notices of the conquest of Britain, the careers of Constantius, the two Constantines, and Maximus, the appeal to Aëtius, and so forth; but even then he could find no means of filling the gaps between.

Maximus he seems to represent as British born;[1] but for a fact two centuries before his own time he is no better authority than another. As for Ambrose, he flatly contradicts Mr. Scott-Gatty (whom Bohn's translation seems again to have misled) and says distinctly that his parents, Romans, no doubt of official rank, met their deaths (not in the struggle for the empire, but) in the Saxon invasion. So much for the conjecture that Constantine the emperor was his father. But once more I quote the passage:—

. . . duce Ambrosio Aureliano, viro modesto, qui solus [fuit comis fidelis fortis veraxque] forte Romanæ gentis [qui] tantæ tempestatis collisione occisis in eadem parentibus purpura nimirum indutis superfuerat: cujus nunc temporibus nostris soboles magnopere avita bonitate degeneravit . . .

Nor does Gildas say that the *soboles Ambrosii* "provoke to battle their cruel conquerors," as Bohn has led Mr. Scott-Gatty to suppose,[2] but that the remnant of the Britons under Ambrose himself took heart of grace and did so. Lastly, the word *soboles*

[1] Insula germen suæ plantationis amarissimæ ad Gallias Maximum mittit.

[2] One word of comment on this remarkable production. Not only is the translation slipshod to a degree, but in each of these instances it turns out to be utterly wrong and misleading. I have already pointed to an instance where it imports words not found in the text.

(if it have any precise application) cannot possibly refer to Arthur. His firm and enlightened rule (if he ever did rule) was already past and over when Gildas wrote.

The *Epistola Gildæ* seems to indicate the persons really meant. That Jeremiad selects for special reprobation or admonition five contemporary kinglets: (i) Constantine,[1] "tyrannical whelp of the foul Damnonian lioness," who that very year violated the sanctuary, and put to the sword two young princes of the blood royal; (ii) young Aurelius Conan [or Caninus] another "lion's whelp"; (iii) greyhaired Vortipor, tyrant of the Demetæ, "infamous son of a good king"; (iv) Cuneglas, whose name is wrested into the Latin *lanio fulvus*, "bloody butcher," in order to fasten upon him that opprobrious description[2]; (v) Maglocun, "the island dragon," a mighty warrior who had the best of masters, overcame a king his uncle in his youth,[3] and despoiled many tyrants of life and kingdom. Among these, on several grounds, one is tempted to seek the seed of Arthur and of Ambrose; though indeed, so far as the testimony of Gildas goes, there might be no Arthur at all, but Ambrose the hero of Mount Badon and saviour of his race.

From Gildas we turn to "the collection of Welsh and Anglian legends which passes under the name of Nennius,"[4] to which the date here assigned is *circa* 796. Other writers have supposed it a good deal later; but the point is of little consequence. Between this work and the age of Arthur admittedly lies not merely the gulf of centuries, but a great national cataclysm. If Gildas had to deplore the absence of documents, few indeed can have survived the renewed struggle with the Saxons and their final victory. The consequences soon appear. Constantius, who died in Britain, is here the son, not the father, of Constantine the Great. Yet these were not obscure personages, unrecorded in the annals of their time. Note the introduction of the marvellous—the miracles of St. German and St. Patrick; the death of Guortigirn by fire from heaven. Ambrosius now becomes *homo sine patre*, the fruit of a sort of immaculate conception;[5] though turning the page we find in this curious patchwork a second and contradictory account taken from Gildas. "*Unus est pater meus de consulibus Romanicæ gentis.*" The contemporary author tells us plainly that the Saxon war was long and doubtful. Here we read another story—an invincible hero, and unbroken success:—

[1] Is this Constantine ap Tydwal, brother of the King of Little Britain? This Constantine, at any rate belongs to a generation subsequent to the settlement of Armorica, to which Damnonia lay nearest on the opposite coast.

[2] Also "urse multorum sessor aurigaque currus receptaculi ursi." The expression recalls the gloss on Nennius which renders Arthur "ursus horribilis," and seems to suggest for his name the etymology Arcturus.

[3] This description cannot fail to remind us of the story of Modred.

[4] Elton, *Origins of English History*. The editors discourse at length about the date of this book; and by common consent it comes to us as a patchwork executed by various hands at widely different dates.

[5] The story attributed by later writers not to Uther Pendragon but to Merlin. A gloss (which has found its way into Hardy's text) suggests that the mother was lying in order to shield her child from danger. Compare the mystery of Arthur's birth.

Corruerunt in uno die nongenti sexaginta viri de uno impetu Arthur, et nemo prostravit eos nisi ipse solus; et in omnibus bellis victor exstitit.

In short, we have passed already from history to the realm of fiction and romance; and no modern "Vindication" can disguise the fact.

The texts of Nennius vary more widely even than those of Gildas. But all the editors I have seen read that Ambrose *fuit rex inter omnes reges Brittanicæ gentis*, not *in omnes regiones Brittaniæ*. Whatever that may mean, to write of an *elective* monarchy looks to me like anachronism. It was not "the natives," but Guorthigirn, to whom he had previously been a cause of apprehension, as the narrative goes on to explain. When Arthur *pugnabat contra illos cum regibus Brittonum, sed ipse dux erat bellorum*, the sentence, fully quoted, need not exclude him from royal rank. The passage which contains the expression *Arthur map uter* is only found upon the margin of one MS., though for some inexplicable reason it was interpolated in the text of Hardy's edition. The *glossator* himself, so far from making *uter* a person's name, or even a title, translates the two words *filius horribilis*. So much for the mighty Uther Pendragon!

Arthur thus remains, and must remain, a hero of romance: in history, the shadow of a shade.[1] Mr. Scott-Gatty's courageous attempt to clothe him with substance has painfully emphasised our doubts. His very existence is matter of faith, not of knowledge.

> "Rain, rain, and sun! a rainbow on the lea!
> And truth is this to me, and that to thee:
> And truth or clothed or naked let it be.
>
> "Rain, sun, and rain! and the free blossom blows:
> Sun, rain, and sun! and where is he who knows?
> From the great deep to the great deep he goes."

But if there be no evidence of his wisdom and his valour, there is even less, perhaps, of the frailties and vices attributed to him. While some of his exploits recall Samson and the Maccabees, his incestuous amours read like an echo of the story of Amnon. We are thus at liberty to picture our hero as near spotless as we choose. As a legendary figure—saviour of his country, the dauntless champion of a lost cause, he is incomparable. We cannot part with him. Though he yield up to Ambrose his kingship among kings, or even the victory of Mount Badon, among the unnamed chieftains who shared the glory and anguish of that deadly strife, there is room for him still. With that we must needs be content; for vain would be the hope that, from some far off Egyptian midden, may yet be unearthed the evidences lost even before the day when Gildas wrote.

W. H. B. B.

[1] I am surprised to find Mr. Scott-Gatty writing of Arthur's bid for the empire as if that were history. Had it been so, we should certainly hear of it from foreign annalists. When his name had become the centre of a legend cycle, the deeds of others tended, as usual, to crystallise round it. In this story, for example, we may see the rise of Constantine, or Maximus, or as some have thought, of Charlemagne.

KING ARTHUR.

In his criticism of my paper on King Arthur, Mr. B. accuses me of carelessness in preparing it—this I candidly admit; of mis leading my readers by quoting Dr. Giles' translation of Gildas—this I am not so sure about, and will presently consider; of quoting passages from Nennius that do not appear in the text—this I deny and will prove later on; and, finally, of making a general chronological bungle of the whole situation. As to this, as far as my paper covered the ground, *i.e.*, from A.D. 382 to 493, the chronology is absolutely feasible. The connection between Maximus and Constantine the Great I must allow is weak, and I regret having quoted this particular Welsh tradition, which, after all, had very little bearing upon the subject my paper dealt with. My authority for it was *The Hendre Book*, and my reason for quoting it was that I am strongly inclined to think there was some such connection between these two men. One fact with regard to this criticism I must say very much surprises me. Mr. B., who poses as a student of the Arthurian legend, has missed, or entirely ignored, the only two novelties in my paper, the only two points, in fact, worthy of consideration or criticism, and for which alone the paper was written. The story and traditional ancestry of Arthur is known to every student of British or Welsh history, and every one is at liberty to believe it or not as they like. The sole object of my paper was to lay before my readers two possibilities—(1) that the mythical Uther Pendragon might be identical with the historical Ambrosius Aurelianus; pleading that as the word Uther, used as a proper name, is unknown in Welsh genealogies, with the exception of the traditional father of Arthur, and as the term "Uther Pendragon" might be translated as meaning "the wonderful, horrible, or victorious commander in chief," it might, after all, be a *nom de guerre* for Ambrosius: (2) that the Cystennyn Vendigaid, or Constantine the Blessed, son of Tydwall, King of Armorica, with his son Constans, a monk, of Welsh tradition, might be identical with the historical Constantine the Usurper, with his son Constans, a monk. The only notice Mr. B. takes of these two novelties is, in the one instance an exclamation of "so much for the mighty Uther Pendragon," of which, I must admit, I don't quite see the relevancy, and in the other a suggestion that Constantine ap Tydwall was identical with Constantine of Damnonia, mentioned by Gildas in his *Epistola* as then living!!

Mr. B. asks for further *data*. I therefore give such *data* as concisely as possible in the form of a tentative chronological summary. I must ask my readers to remember that this summary, as was my paper, is based upon the assumption that the battle of Badon Mount was fought *circa* 492-3 and not A.D. 516, which is the date given in the *Annales Cambriæ*. This date *circa* 492-3 throws King Arthur back twenty-three years, and so brings all the leading characters of this epoch within chronological touch of one another.

TENTATIVE CHRONOLOGICAL SUMMARY.

382 A.D. Maximus, by birth a Briton,[1] or a Spaniard,[2] or from parts near Britain,[3] was in command of the Roman army of occupation in Britain. The army revolt, and elect him Emperor of the West.[4]

388 A.D. Maximus was beheaded at Aquileia, and his son Victor was slain at Vienne.[4]

Welsh tradition claims Maximus as a Briton, and gives him by Helen his wife, who was daughter and heir of Eudhaf, King of Britain, the following sons:—Owain Vinddu, Ednyved, Peblig, and Cystennyn.[5] He is mentioned by Gildas, Bede, and Nennius.

400 A.D. [N.B., this is quite a possible date for the birth of Ambrosius Aurelianus, or it might be placed even earlier.]

407 A.D. The army in Britain again revolt and elect one Marcus, Emperor of the West, but shortly after kill him. They then elect one Gratian, a Briton, to the same post; he reigned only four months and was, like his predecessor, put to death. Constantine, another Briton, was then elected Emperor of the West.[4]

Welsh tradition states that Gratian the Usurper was killed both by Constantine, son of Maximus, and by Constantine, son of Tydwall.[6]

407-11 A.D. Constantine, a Briton, of low extraction,[7] no obscure person,[8] serving in the army of occupation in Britain, was, upon the death of Gratian the Usurper, elected Emperor of the West by the army. Passing into Gaul he gained a great victory over the Vandals, upon which Honorius the Emperor, against his will, recognised his election by sending him the Imperial robe. He had a son called Constans, who was a monk, but of whom he nevertheless made a Cæsar. Gerontius, a British general commanding the forces in Spain, thinking he had been slighted, caused a revolt in the army against Constantine, the outcome of which was that Constantine and his son Julian were murdered at Arles, and Constans Cæsar, late a monk, was slain at Vienne an° 411[4].

Welsh tradition states that Cystennyn Vendigaid, or Constantine the Blessed, grandfather of King Arthur, was second son of Tydwall, King of Armorica. At the request of the Britons he landed here with an army to assist them against the Picts and Scots. He slew Gratian, and was thereupon

[1] Gildas' *De Excidio*, § x (Petrie).
[2] *Zosimi Hist: Novæ*, Lib. iv, cap. xxxv.
[3] *Socrates Hist: Eccl:* Lib. v, cap. xi.
[4] Foreign Historians, see *Monumenta Historica Britannica.*
[5] *Iolo MSS.*, p. 512; *Hendre Book*, etc.
[6] *Hendre Book.*
[7] *Orosii Hist*: Lib. vii, cap. xl.
[8] *Procopii Cæsar, de Bello Vandalico*, Lib. i, cap. ii.

elected King of Britain. He married a Roman lady, and had issue by her three sons. Constans, the eldest, was a monk, yet nevertheless succeeded to the throne of Britain; Emrys Wledic, or Ambrosius Aurelianus, the second son; and Uther Pendragon, the third son, father of King Arthur. Constantine and his son Constans, the monk, were both slain at the instigation of Vortigern, a Briton, who thereupon seized the British throne.[1] At the time of this occurrence, both Ambrosius Aurelianus and Uther Pendragon were children.[2]

448-9 A.D. Anterior to this date Ambrosius was leading a faction against Vortigern.[3] The Saxons, under the leadership of Hengist and Horsa, landed in Kent.[4]

455 A.D. Ambrosius and Vortimer, son of Vortigern, gained a victory over the Saxons at the battle of Aylesford.[5]

456-63 A.D. [N.B. Between these dates Ambrosius was elected supreme King of Britain.]

463 A.D. [N.B. This is a possible date for the birth of King Arthur. Mallory, in his *Morte Dartur*, opens with this sentence:—"It befel in the dayes of Uther Pendragon when he was kynge of all England." This must have been after Vortigern had been deposed. He then proceeds to relate the meeting of Uther (? Ambrosius) and Igrayne, and the birth of Arthur. In cap. iii he writes:—"Thenne within two yeres kyng Uther felle seke of a grete maladye." The two years are computed from Arthur's birth, and Uther (? Ambrosius) dies of the "grete maladye." From the above one may fairly say that Arthur's father was probably a man advanced in years.]

465 A.D. Ambrosius Aurelianus was completely routed by the Saxons.[6] Concerning Ambrosius, Gildas states that his parents had worn the purple.[7] Bede writes of them:—"*regium nomen et insignia ferentibus.*"[8] Camden writes of Ambrosius:—"But Gildas and Bede write that his ancestors were Emperors, and slain here, and if so, why may not I positively affirm that he was descended from that Constantine, who under the 4th Consulship of Theodosius the younger, out of the hopes that good fortune would attend that name, was chosen Emperor in Britain, and afterwards murdered at Arles."[9]

[1] This statement cannot be taken literally. Vortigern no doubt, either in blood or politically, represented the faction that brought about the deaths of Constantine and his son Constans, as Ambrosius evidently held him responsible for the same, but Vortigern could not be identical with Gerontius.
[2] *Geoffrey of Monmouth*, Book vi, cap. vii.
[3] *Nennius*, cap. xxviii (Petrie).
[4] *Ang. Saxon Chron.*, Bede, Lib. i, cap. xv.
[5] *Henry of Huntingdon*, Book ii.
[6] *Student's History of England*, Gardiner, p. 27.
[7] *De Excidio*, § xxv (Petrie).
[8] *Bede*, Book i, cap. xvi.
[9] *Britannia*, Camden, 1695 ed., p. 98.

Mr. B., on the other hand, in his criticism, thus writes of Ambrosius:—"As for Ambrose, he [*i.e.*, Gildas] flatly contradicts Mr. Scott-Gatty (whom Bohn's translation seems again to have misled) and says distinctly that his parents, Romans, no doubt of official rank, met their deaths (not in the struggle for the empire, but) in the Saxon invasion. So much for the conjecture that Constantine the emperor was his father."

According to Nennius, Ambrosius was leading a faction against Vortigern anterior to the Saxon landing in 449, how then could his parents, who were dead at that time, have been killed in an invasion which had not yet taken place, or Ambrosius be the sole survivor of the same? What Gildas does say is that Ambrosius alone had survived the upheaval of that great storm, the same in which his parents, who had been undoubtedly raised to the purple, had perished. Why should not this same storm have been one of those that shook the whole of Western Europe on the gradual decline of the great Roman Empire? In one of these upheavals we know that Constantine the Usurper, and Constans his son, the monk, both came to an untimely end.

478 A.D. [*Welsh tradition* states that Arthur was fighting at the early age of 15.]

488 A.D. Arthur was fighting against Ochta, son of Hengist, as *Dux bellorum cum regibus Britonum.*[1]

493 A.D. Arthur won the battle of Badon Mount, which was the last of a series of twelve battles.[2] Concerning Arthur—Nennius often alludes to him, but Gildas and Bede do not mention him by name. Geoffrey of Monmouth puts these words into Arthur's mouth when addressing his troops before his expedition against Rome:—"Likewise Constantine, the son of Helena and Maximian [Maximus] who were both my kinsmen, and both wore the crown of Britain, gained the imperial throne of Rome."[3] Yet in the body of his work he makes Arthur to be the son of Uther Pendragon, nephew of Ambrosius, and grandson of Constantine, the brother of the King of Brittany.[4] Mallory in his *Morte Dartur* also makes Arthur say:—"I have understood that Bellinus and Brenius kynges of Bretayne have had thempyre in their handes many dayes. And also Constantine the sone of Heleyne which is open evydence that we owe noo trybute to Rome but of ryght we that ben descended of them have ryght to clayme the tytle of thempyre;"[5] but in the story he is son of Uther Pendragon.

516 A.D. This is to my mind a possible date for the battle of Camlan, in which Arthur was mortally wounded. I am well

[1] *Nennius*, cap. lxiii (Petrie).
[2] *Ibid.*, cap. lxiv.
[3] *Geoffrey of Monmouth*, Book ix, cap. xvi.
[4] *Ibid.*, Book vi, cap. iv.
[5] *Morte Darthur*, Mallory, Book v, cap. i.

aware that the evidence is not sufficiently strong to establish this date as that of the battle, but there are indications that it might be such, which I here give.

The date given in the *Annales Cambriæ* is 537. "*Gueith Camlan in qua Arthur et Medraut corruere*;" but this same authority gives the date 516 as that of Badon Mount, which there is every reason to suppose is not correct; nevertheless, it would seem to indicate that there was a battle fought in 516, in which Arthur took part. In *The Hendre Book* I find attached in the margin to the following individuals, the accompanying dates:—

Constantius Chlorus, an° 305.
Emrys Wledic or Ambrosius Aurelianus, an° 466.
King Arthur, an° 516.

We know that Constantius died at York in 306; that Ambrosius was, according to Mr. Gardiner, overthrown in 465. How about the date 516 to Arthur? It looks to me as though the compiler of *The Hendre Book* was at any rate guessing at the dates of the death of these men.

In the same work it is stated of Caswalhon Lawhir or Caswallon with the Longhand, King of North Wales, and father of Maglocune or Maelgwn Gwynedd, that:—"he was slaine one the parte of Kinge Arthur at Camlan field against Medrod." *Welsh tradition* says that Maelgwn succeeded his father as King of North Wales in 517.[1]

On turning to the *Anglo Saxon Chronicle* we find that after this date 516, the West Saxons made great headway under Cerdic and Cynric, his son, who had landed in Britain A.D. 495.

"519. This year Cerdic and Cynric obtained the kingdom of the West Saxons, and the same year they fought against the Britons, where it is now called Cerdicsford. And that time forth the royal offspring of the West Saxons reigned," etc.

This all looks as though the Britons were unable any longer to hold the Saxons in check. What better reason could there be than the loss of their great leader, King Arthur?

I will now proceed to answer some of Mr. B's criticisms, which have not been replied to in the foregoing summary.

HELEN, MOTHER OF CONSTANTINE THE GREAT.—Mr. B. says she was probably a Dacian princess, and that her son was *certainly* born in Dacia. He does not give his authorities, but I suppose they are Cedrenus, an eleventh, and Nicephorus Callistus, a fourteenth century writer. On the other hand, Fl: Lucius Dexter, a fourth century historian writes:—"*Ab anno* 306 *Successerat in imperio, Gubernationeque Hispaniæ, Constantio patri Constantinus filius cogno-*

[1] Williams' *Eminent Welshmen*, p. 311; *Cambrian Biography* (Owen), p. 235; and *Liber Landavensis*, p. 343, note.

mento Magnus ex Helena foemina primaria Britanniæ."[1] The whole of this matter has been fully argued out by Mr. Morant, in his history of Colchester,[2] and to that work I would refer Mr. B., where he will find that the weight of evidence is in favour of Helena being a Briton, and that no one knows for a *certainty* where Constantine the Great was born.

CONSTANTIUS CHLORUS.—Mr. B. says I ought to show that Constantius was in this island at a date prior to that when he is known to have been here. As far as I know he makes his *debut* in the pages of history as Governor of Dalmatia, *circa* 283; where he resided anterior to that date no one knows. Zosimus states that he lived for the most part in Britain.[3] It is a well-known fact that after he had been declared Emperor he still lived at York, where he died in the year 306. Also that Constantine the Great, his son by Helena, the year after his conversion to Christianity, summoned to the Council of Arles, A.D. 314, three British Bishops, thereby recognising the British Church as a branch of the true Catholic faith. Why this interest in, I might almost say affection for, this far-off island by these two Emperors of Rome?

I may here add that Gildas does not mention either Constantius or the two Constantines in his *De Excidio*, as stated by Mr. B.

GILDAS' PARENTAGE.—Mr. B. scoffs at the idea of Gildas being one of twenty-four sons of a Scottish king [not that I ever said he was]. His reason for scoffing is that Gildas wrote so strongly against the Scots! This is not what is generally said of his parentage; he is stated to have been one of twenty-four sons of King Caw, a North British chieftain, whose territories no doubt lay north of the now defined Scottish border, but the North Britons were a totally different race from the barbaric Scots, the associates of the Picts; they were, in fact, their bitterest enemies. No wonder Gildas used strong language. One of the vices of the age was, according to Gildas, concubinage—it produces large families.

NENNIUS.—Mr. B. writes:—"From Gildas we turn to 'the collection of Welsh and Anglian legends, which passes under the name of Nennius' . . . in short, we have passed already from history to the realm of fiction and romance." What ancient chronicler has ever existed who at times has not given way to marvellous recitals, some of which contain the sternest truths of life here and hereafter? But let us keep Mr. B. to his authors—Gildas, the historian; Nennius, the romancer. I wonder whether Mr. B. has read in Gildas the story of St. Alban crossing the river Thames, the waters dividing for him, as in the Red Sea incident in Holy writ? This is quite as marvellous as anything related in Nennius, and it is further a somewhat vulgar miraculous incident without any symbolical or allegorical meaning underlying it, such as one finds in the Nennius recitals. It is impossible for me here to enter

[1] *Chronic.*, ad. A.C. 311.
[2] *History of Colchester* (Morant), Book i, p. 28 *et seq.*
[3] *Hist. Novæ*, Lib. ii, cap. viii.

into a vindication of Nennius, and if I did I should only quote Professor Zimmer's able work, *Nennius Vindicatus*, which, after all, Mr. B. can read. Professor Zimmer has spent many years of his life in making a most careful and elaborate analytical study of this chronicle, or rather these chronicles, and I feel sure Mr. B. will forgive me if I prefer the opinion of this learned German Professor to his hurried and somewhat pointless remarks upon this work. I must here apologise for having taken for granted that Mr. Petrie selected to edit for that great work, *Monumenta Historica Britannica*, the *oldest* edition of Nennius; on referring to the preface I find he selected a more modern one, but the one which he considered to be the *most authentic*, the same edition, in fact, that had been edited by Dr. Gale. This manuscript is in the Public Library at Cambridge, and in the text of it appears the "*Artur Mab Uter*"[1] paragraph, and also the sentence about Ambrosius, "*qui fuerat rex in omnes regiones Britanniæ.*"[2] The "*Artur Mab Uter*" sentence also occurs as a marginal note in a MS. lettered by Mr. Petrie "B." My critic says that neither of these appear in the text. While upon this matter I notice that he seems to shy at my expression about Ambrosius being *elected* King of Britain. He says "to write of an *elective* monarchy looks to me like anachronism." It did not look so to that sixth century historian Gildas, however. In § 21 he describes the luxury that followed the victory of the Britons over the Picts and Scots, after the vain appeal to Ætius, when they were driven to bay in their mountains, and at last rallied. He says that they anointed wicked kings.[3] These kings in their turn were put to death by their own anointers,[4] and others and worse were elected.[5] For this and other reasons which could be cited, it looks as though the Supreme Kingship of Britain was elective.

GILDAS DE EXCIDIO, § 26.—Bede, who wrote under 200 years after Gildas, and evidently copied him as to this paragraph, as he uses almost the same words, gathered from it that the battle of Badon Mount took place forty-four years after the landing of the Saxons; no doubt he had before him a less corrupt edition of Gildas than now exists. The oldest MS. known to be in existence to-day is a copy made not earlier than the end of the twelfth century, and deposited in the Public Library at Cambridge. Bede's words are:—"*Et ex eo tempore nunc cives nunc hostes vincebant, usque ad annum obsessionis Badonici montis, quando non minimas eisdem hostibus strages dabant, xl^me^ circiter et iiii^e^ anno adventus eorum in Brittaniam.*"[6]

Camden also evidently takes the same reading. He writes:—"The Saxons indeed, about the forty-fourth year after their landing in Britain, by a breach of articles renewing the war, laid siege

[1] *Nennius*, cap. lxiii (Petrie).
[2] *Ibid.*, cap. liii.
[3] "*Ungebantur reges et non per Deum.*"
[4] "*Unctoribus.*"
[5] "*Aliis electis truculentioribus.*"
[6] *Bede*, Book i, cap. xvi.

to this city [*i.e.*, Bath], but being surprised by the warlike Arthur, they betook themselves to Badon hill, where (though in a desperate condition) they fought it out, and were slain in great numbers. This seems to be the same hill with that we now call Banesdown, hanging over a little village near the city named Bath Stone, and showing at this day its bulwarks, and a rampire. I know there are some who seek for it in Yorkshire; but let Gildas himself restore it to this place, for in an old manuscript copy of him in the Cambridge Library, where he treats of the victory of Aurelius Ambrosius, he says:—'*To the year of* Badon hill *siege, which is not far from the mouth of the Severn.*'"[1]

Monsieur de la Borderie, in his interesting paper entitled "The date of the Birth of Gildas,"[2] takes it for granted that Bede copied Gildas, and by introducing into Gildas' text certain words out of Bede's, he gets therefrom the date of Badon Mount as taking place fourty-four years after the Saxon landing, and the date of the birth of Gildas as being identical with that of the battle, viz., 493, thus:—"*Et ex eo tempore nunc cives nunc hostes vincebant, usque ad annum obsessionis Badonici montis novissimæque ferme de furciferis non minimæ stragis, quique quadragesimus quartus* [*adventus eorum in Britanniam*] *ut novi, oritur annus, mense jam uno emenso, qui et meæ nativitatis est.*" The words introduced I have placed between brackets. These four words, as he says, make sense of this otherwise incomplete passage.

Dr. Giles, who edited the Bohn edition, also gathers from § 26 the date of Badon Mount and the birth of Gildas.

Feeling quite incompetent to enter the lists with such a galaxy of scholars, each of whom seems to take his own line on this matter, and not feeling at all contented with Mr. B.'s paraphrase of the same passage, I sent my paper, together with Mr. B.'s criticism, to a friend of undoubted high scholastic attainments. I have his consent to publish his epitome of the situation. He writes as follows:—

"In his preface Gildas describes his own language as 'poor, though well meaning' [*vili licet stylo, tamen benigno*]. It is unfortunate that it should be held to be so poor that no scholar can refrain from enriching it with additions, so as to make it bear his own well-meaning interpretations.

"But Gildas is so important for his period—he is the only contemporary evidence we have—that it is well worth yet another effort to arrive at, not what he may have meant, but what he actually says.

"His attitude and purpose are given us in his preface [§ 1] 'I have resolved,' he says, 'to describe the ventures in fierce warfare not so much of the most valiant warriors as of the indolent.' It is plain, therefore, that there are 'valiant warriors' to whom he will not do justice. The one person whom he unreservedly commends, he passes over in a sentence; he does not even name

[1] *Camden's Britannia*, 1695 ed., p. 70.

[2] "*La date de la naissance de Gildas*" (*M. de la Borderie, Revue Celtique*, vol. vi, p. 1-13).

the king who is responsible for what he calls 'the present peace and justice' [§ 26, *præsentis serenitatis ac justitiæ*] which had, when he wrote, lasted a generation.

"He confesses [§ 1] he has held his tongue for *10 years or more* out of compunction, and contrition, and bewilderment, but at last has yielded to the pressure of his friends. What was the event which ten years before had put into his head to write his '*Historiola*'? Who was it whose hand had brought '*serenitas ac justitia*' to the land, whose departure was the signal for the headlong rush *ad Tartara* of his successors, and whose memory kept Gildas silent for more than ten years?

"What does Gildas actually say about the course of events from the landing of the Saxons to the time of his writing? If this period was under 100 years, it would be well within his power to have heard of the events from actual survivors, as no one supposes that he was under forty years old when he wrote.

"[§ 23]. In the first place he says, the Saxons were called in by Gurthigern and for sometime [*multo tempore*] were kept quiet by doles [§ 24]. Becoming discontented with these they set to ravaging the land on their own account [§ 25]. But after a time [*tempore aliquanto interveniente*] the remnant of the Britons arose under Ambrosius and at last were given the victory [§ 26]. After the time of Ambrosius [*ex eo tempore*] the struggle was uncertain, until the decisive victory of Badon Mount. The year of Badon Mount is the forty-fourth year. After that victory, for a time the Britons lived properly, but the witnesses of this unhoped for deliverance passing away [*illis decedentibus*], a new generation has arisen of men who cannot remember the struggle and who are conscious of the present calm and justice. These, except a very few [*pauci valde pauci*] are rushing daily to Hell.

"What does this plain tale amount to? The Saxons are supposed to have landed in 449 A.D. A few years of doles to an ever increasing and insatiable invader would seem a long time and account for Gildas' expression '*multo tempore*.' Another few years of ravaging and desolation would pass the '*aliquantum tempus*' up to Ambrosius' success. There are sixteen years between the landing of the Saxons and Ambrosius' death in 465, if that is the date. If Arthur was born two years before Ambrosius' death, the date of his birth will be 463. If he began fighting at the traditional age of fifteen, he fought his first battle in 478, and would have fifteen years for the rest of the twelve battles to bring the battle of Badon Mount, and his twelfth and last battle to 493.

"Gildas says the year of Badon Mount dawns or begins the *forty-fourth year*; this he knows as sure as he knows the date of his own birth. The forty-fourth year of what? Does he not mean what Bede understood him to mean, the forty-fourth year of the struggle, and therefore the forty-fourth year from the landing of the Saxons?

"For the memory of the importance of this battle to have died out we must allow twenty to thirty years at least, which will bring

us to 513 or 523. For ten years or more the degenerate stock have been rushing to Hades, and Gildas has held his hand over his mouth. He must at anyrate then be writing after 523 or 533. If Arthur's death in 516 at the battle of Camlan was the cause and commencement of this ten years of evil living, it would give 526 or a few years after as the date of Gildas' warning.

"Mr. B., in his paraphrase of Gildas' sentence about Badon Mount is just as arbitrary and inexact as the translator whom he condemns. Everyone must agree that whatever he *meant*, what Gildas *said* is 'the year of Badon Mount, which dawns (or begins) the fourty-fourth year, as I know well.' Mr. B. paraphrases thus: 'The year now begun is, to my knowledge, the forty-fourth since that event.' He proceeds at once to ask, 'What then of Gildas, the one authority contemporary with the age of Arthur; and how much does he tell us?' He may well ask."

Although Dr. Giles' somewhat free translation of Gildas § 25, when he states that it was the *soboles* of Ambrosius who goaded the cruel conquerors to battle, cannot be accepted, yet this in no way affects my case. All I wanted from Gildas was that which even Mr. B. cannot deprive me of, viz:—That the parents of Ambrosius had been adorned with the purple, and had met with untimely deaths in the struggles [*not* Saxon, as Mr. B asserts] of the times. That Ambrosius alone of his race had survived the same, and was Commander in chief of the British forces in a series of battles, which series preceded another series, the latter ending with the great victory of Badon Mount. It is from Nennius, not Gildas, that I gather that the name of the Commander in chief of this second series was Arthur. It is also from Nennius, not Gildas, that I gather that it could not be Ambrosius who led the forces at Badon Mount, as he was fighting *ante* 449, and would have to be of an abnormal age to be alive and on active service in 493, or, as Mr. B. would have it, 516.

In conclusion, I feel that an apology is due to the Editor and readers of *The Genealogist*, in that so much of the valuable space of their periodical has been taken up with this subject of King Arthur, which, after all, is not of universal interest. I trust, therefore, that Mr. B. will now allow the matter to drop. He asked me for fuller *data*; I have given such *data* to him. I have also answered his criticisms, and I hope that unless he has some new light to throw upon the two points raised by me, viz., the identity of Uther Pendragon with Ambrosius Aurelianus, and that of Constantine the Blessed with Constantine the Usurper, he will allow the memory of Arthur to drift back again into limbo.

A. S. Scott-Gatty.

KING ARTHUR: A REJOINDER.

I am rather amused to see that Mr. Scott-Gatty, knowing all he does of the circumstances under which my criticisms were written and rewritten, finds some of them lacking in point. A few at any rate have gone home. His misquotations are handsomely acknowledged, and of them we will say no more. But this time he has been somewhat careless in quoting me. Thus I did not charge him with misleading his readers, or with interpolating glosses and other extraneous matter into his texts; but pointed out that this had been done by the editor and translator on whom he unfortunately relied, and that he had himself evidently been misled. I never said that Gildas named Constantius and the two Constantines: merely that foreign historians would supply an outline of their careers. The date 516 I do not think I even mentioned. It was the *Vita Gildæ*, not I, that made Gildas a Scot As for the legend of St. Alban, let the galled jade wince. While setting up Gildas as the authority—the sole authority—for the times in which he lived, I distinctly stated my view that, for earlier events, "he is no better authority than another."

While upon the subject of authorities, may I suggest that Mr. Scott-Gatty would find in Mommsen's critical and scholarly edition of Gildas and Nennius more help in regard to the text than in the inferior work he cites. When Gildas represents Ambrose as on the whole victorious over the Saxons, is it respectful to cite a recent school history which asserts that "he was completely routed by them"? Indeed the authorities selected for the fifth century form a remarkable group. A single page (p. 75) supplies the following list:—

"Welsh Tradition."
Geoffrey of Monmouth.
Nennius.
Anglo-Saxon Chronicle.
Henry of Huntingdon.
Gardiner, *Student's History of England.*
Malory, *Morte D'Artur.*
Gildas.
Bede.
Camden, *Britannia.*

Morant's *History of Colchester* must not be left out; and for dates, the margin of the *Hendre Book.*

One word, in passing, about Zimmer, whose name seems to be the proverbial stick to beat a dog with. As it has been flourished over me, I must mildly protest I am not frightened. There is a type of German scholarship which appeals to the saving sense of humour of the mere Briton. Far be it from me to disparage the toil or the erudition spent upon the *Nennius Vindicatus*; only I do not see that it helps Mr. Scott-Gatty much, for frankly the net

result is to leave his author without one shred of authority, except of course for such statements as can be traced to Gildas. Heaven preserve our *disjecta membra* from such a vindicator.

Let us now clear away the wreckage. Half the "tentative pedigree" or thereabouts has gone by the board. With King Coel, Helen, Constantine the Great, and the rest, we have no further concern; and on these heads I may well be content with Mr. Scott-Gatty's admissions. The passage about the *soboles Ambrosii*, which figured originally as a probable allusion to Arthur by Gildas himself, goes too. "It does not affect my case." No indeed; but it did very materially, until Bohn's "free translation" was shewn to be a rank blunder.

The "tentative pedigree," from Maximus to Arthur, remains for us to examine; and this Mr. Scott-Gatty complains that I treated with scant consideration. Well, I will endeavour very shortly to make amends. And first be it noted that, in order to furnish Maximus with a son named Constantine, it was necessary to identify him with a certain Maxen ap Llewellyn. That identification has now been definitely abandoned; and with it goes the suggested paternity of Constantine, so that we must, in fact, begin with Constantine himself.

Now Mr. Scott-Gatty has introduced three persons of that or a similar name.

(i). The historical Constantine, a Roman officer serving in Britain, proclaimed Emperor in 407 by his legionaries after the fall of Gratian. He crossed the channel to attack the Vandals in Gaul and Spain, and upon his victory a year later was recognised by Honorius. He and his son were put to death at Arles in 411 by disaffected troops. Constans, another son, said to have been tonsured before commanding an army, was put to death at Vienne by Gerontius about the same time.

(ii). A traditional Kustennyn ap Maxen ap Llewellyn, said to have refused a crown in order to be "duke" of Ewyas Urchenfeld (a highly suspicious quarter), and direct ancestor of Vortigern.

(iii). A traditional Kustennyn ap Tydwal, said to have been a chief from Armorica, who fought successfully against Picts and Scots till treacherously slain by one, and to have had a son Emrys Wledig.

Such, for what it is worth, seems to be the core of the tradition. As usual there are accretions. Certain deeds of the historical Constantine, for instance, are attributed (or a garbled version of them is), to *both* the others; his tonsured son to one of them. To cling to these accretions, while rejecting the genuine tradition is to drop the substance for the shadow, like the dog in the fable. But that is what Mr. Scott-Gatty has done. In his first article he selected the father of the second, the career of the first, and the sons of the first and third, and by this composite method produced the "novelty" (the term is his own) which he again commends to our attention.

It is true he brings forward another argument for this identification, namely the supposed statement of Gildas that Ambrose was the

son of a Roman Emperor, slain in the continental wars. Assuming for the moment that Ambrose was Emrys Wledig ap Custennyn Vendigaid, how very cautious Gildas is, where Mr. Scott-Gatty is so positive. No "ut novi" here; but "*forte* Romanæ gentis," "parentibus purpura *nimirum* indutis." Gildas thus claims no certain knowledge of his parentage; while the phrase "tantæ tempestatis collisione occisis" (sandwiched in between those significant particles as it is) can only be interpreted by the context. The whole passage is too long to quote, but my readers can see for themselves that these words occur towards the end of a chapter, that the whole chapter is about the Saxon invasion, so is the chapter before, and so is the chapter before that. I quite see that this interpretation may conflict with Mr. Scott-Gatty's chronology; but that is his affair.

Mr. Scott-Gatty's attitude towards the Welsh genealogies of that epoch is throughout rather perplexing. Sometimes he quotes them with respect: indeed his whole superstructure rests upon them. Sometimes again he treats them with contumely. At the few points where they impinge upon ascertained fact, they are, as he has shewn, damaged by the contact. It would be unkind to suggest that he has accepted just so much as will square with his theory, and rejected the rest. No doubt in his own mind he has some principle of criticism, some touchstone of credibility; but it has not been disclosed, explicitly or otherwise. As to the precise weight to be attached to this form of tradition, opinions will widely differ. Pedigrees such as those of Tydwal and Vortigern one may believe or disbelieve; there is little or no material for argument about them. With Arthur it is a different matter. Round his name had grown an epic or legend cycle before the date at which our earliest Welsh documents had taken the shape in which we know them. His pedigree, therefore, must be received with special caution; for so famous a hero was bound to be fitted with the most illustrious ancestry available, even as Gildas felt sure that Ambrose must be son of a Roman, and an Emperor at that. Remember also the case of Hereward.

At this point evidently I must have failed to make my argument clear, or Mr. Scott-Gatty would hardly complain that I paid no attention to his second novelty. To question whether such persons as Arthur and Uther ever existed, is surely to deal somewhat drastically with their pedigree. As for Arthur, I lean towards the view that he is probably founded on fact—though admitting that this is highly questionable. Not so with Uther. His genesis and origin are clear enough. Someone wrote, in the margin of Nennius, "Arthur map uter": the same or another hand added the translation "filius horribilis"—meaning, I suppose, "child of wrath" or "child of terror." Later writers (ignoring the translation) made Uther a proper name, and invented the title Pendragon to adorn it. It is as though a historian, finding King Charles stigmatised as a son of Belial, were to discuss gravely whether Belial was a title of King James, or whether there was an error in the royal pedigree.

As for Mr. Scott-Gatty's British dates, I have already commented on the sources from which they are derived, such at least as are not purely his own. Since their purpose was to shew probable cause for making Arthur son of Ambrose, it will be sufficient to remark that, after selecting those most favourable to his views, the result is to make Ambrose perhaps only sixty-three when he became a father—possibly (as he admits) a good deal older.

Here Mr. Scott-Gatty's anonymous friend "of undoubted high scholastic attainments" appears on the scene, to pronounce my paraphrase of a disputed sentence "arbitrary and inaccurate." The first, with all respect, it was not, since I gave reasons for taking the words as I did; nor has he condescended to specify any inaccuracy. Were the august name revealed, no doubt I should tremble: as Veiled Prophet, his scholarship must speak for itself. Not to dwell upon the engaging simplicity with which he accepts the *Prefatio Gildæ* as an authentic work of that writer, I must most humbly confess myself not scholar enough to see in the text the sense he desires. Let me once more quote the passage:—

usque ad annum obsessionis Badonici montis . . . , quique quadragesimus quartus, ut novi, orditur [*or* oritur] annus, mense jam primo emenso, qui jam et meæ nativitatis est.

This is rendered by the great man "the year of Badon Mount is the fourty-fourth year," or again, "the year of Badon Mount dawns or begins the forty-fourth year; this he knows as sure as he knows the date of his own birth"; or yet again, "the year of Badon Mount, which dawns (or begins) the fourty-fourth year, as I know well." The words "mense jam primo emenso" he has each time omitted, also the insignificant conjunction *que*; and indeed they are very awkward for him.

Now let me appeal to Mr. Scott-Gatty to shake off for one moment his exceeding modesty, and say (if his Latin be not all forgotten) what the words *quique oritur annus* can be but an inversion of *annusque qui oritur*; and then, having tried to fit in the missing clause, confess that this time his Homer has nodded. I can still see nothing in the sentence but the statement (i) that Gildas knew all about Mount Badon; (ii) that he wrote forty-three years after the battle; and (iii) that his birthday was in April. The obscurity of the passage once more I freely admit, reserving my doubts about the text. It is open, no doubt, to Bede, Mr. Scott-Gatty, and his learned friend, to propose any emendation they please; but at best their conjectures will be a sorry foundation on which to build up a new system of chronology.

W. H. B. B.